



**The Tennessee Department of Labor
& Workforce Development**
Nashville, TN
615-741-2257
Contact: Milissa Reiersen

NEWS RELEASE

Phil Bredesen
Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 5, 2003

James Neeley
Commissioner

John Deere Power Products in Greeneville Receives Star Award

Nashville – Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development Deputy Commissioner Bob Henningsen, on behalf of Governor Phil Bredesen, today awarded John Deere Power Products in Greeneville the **VOLUNTEER STAR** Award. The **VOLUNTEER Safety Through Accountability and Recognition (STAR)** Award is the state's highest honor for workplace safety and health and a nationally recognized program.

Deputy Commissioner Bob Henningsen congratulated many of the manufacturing facility's 1,000 employees during the luncheon ceremony held at the Greeneville company. "Tennessee's **VOLUNTEER STAR** program participants are a select group of employers who have designed and implemented outstanding health and safety programs. We welcome John Deere Power Products into this exclusive group," said Henningsen.

The main objective of the **VOLUNTEER STAR** program is to emphasize the importance of, encourage the improvement of, and recognize excellence in occupational health and safety programs. Employers, employees, and TOSHA, working as partners, develop the program. This results in improved employee motivation, reduced workers' compensation costs, and community recognition. STAR sites generally experience 60-80 percent fewer injuries and illness than like industries.

The main incentive for participation in the STAR program is the improvement of the company's safety and health program, which helps reduce accidents and injuries. The program also allows employers to be removed from programmed compliance inspection lists for a period of three years. TOSHA works with companies through the internal and external review that's part of the application process.

John Deere Power Products manufactures lawn-mowing equipment. They produce both walk-behind and riding equipment, as well as a variety of attachments and accessories for the mowers. Manufacturing is the primary activity at the Greeneville facility. TOSHA's staff found numerous aspects of the JDPP plant's safety and health management systems that exceeded our requirements. One of the most noteworthy is the sites' effort in the area of ergonomics. The employees perform extremely repetitive tasks and are prone to repetitive-stress trauma types of injuries. This sites' aggressive ergonomics program has kept the employees here much safer than employees do at similar facilities.

-More-

“We feel very honored,” said Bobby Jones, Business Excellence Team Leader at John Deere Power Products in Greenville.

“We have at least 20 percent of our workforce who are directly involved through (safety) taskforces and teams, but everyone is involved in the safety program in some way.”

For more information on the **VOLUNTEER STAR** Award program, contact TOSHA’s Consultative Services office at 1-800-325-9901.

(03-044)

####